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COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT
First session
12-23 April 1993
Agenda item 12

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS FIRST SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Asrat BULBULA (Ethiopia)

Chapter ___

OTHER MATTERS

1. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development considered agenda item 11 at its 1st meeting, on 12 April 1993. This item was added to make it possible for the Commission to consider themes for its future work, in particular its second session.

2. Criteria for the selection of substantive themes for future sessions of the Commission were discussed. It was suggested that the topics chosen should:

(a) Be timely and of global relevance;

(b) Be topics on which sufficient synthesized knowledge existed;

(c) Be based on the comparative advantages of the Commission;

(d) Reflect the concerns of the majority if not all of the countries;

(e) Be appropriate in the context of the Commission's mandate;

(f) Be sufficiently flexible for developing countries to identify courses of action.

3. Among the topics suggested were the following: science and technology and women; science and technology and issues related to the conversion of military technology to civilian use; information science and technologies; application of biotechnology to agriculture, health etc.; science and technology for children, for instance, in relation to educational technologies; linkage between research and development and the production sector; role of science and technology in the informal sector; and ecology.

4. It was stressed that topics chosen should as far as possible be linked to each other, with a view to achieving holistic and multidisciplinary approaches. For instance, the issue of women could be linked to the question of science and technology in the informal sector, as well as to the relationship between research and development and production, and to the question of basic needs. It was proposed that the Commission focus on two or three themes at each session. The topics considered some years previously by the former Advisory Committee could be updated and also taken into account in the selection of future themes.

5. The Director of the Science, Technology, Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Division commended the delegates for reaching a consensus on criteria for the selection of themes for the Commission and underlined the importance of the second session in 1995, which would take place during the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. She supported the views expressed by delegates on the need to combine and integrate several interrelated issues into broader themes. It was pointed out that, in addition to United Nations organizations and agencies, the Commission could also, through appropriate modalities, invite the private sector and non-governmental organizations to contribute to its work.

6. The Commission also felt that unrealistic goals should be avoided and that it should instead direct its work towards a clearly defined, specific and pragmatic programme that could be effectively implemented.

7. Lastly, the Chairman pointed out that it might be premature at that stage to discuss the question of financial resources for implementing the work programme of the Commission.